

April 20, 2010

Five Inspiring South Floridians Honored at 18th Annual African-American Achievers Miami Northwestern Senior Receives Youth Achiever Award and Scholarship to FSU

****VIDEO and PHOTO links included below****

Deerfield Beach, Fla. – Five inspirational South Floridians -- a teacher, firefighter/paramedic, business leader, principal and high school senior -- were recognized at the [African-American Achievers](#) awards ceremony on April 14 for helping to improve our community and motivate future generations. More than 800 of their family, friends and supporters attended the 18th annual event at the Broward County Convention Center, presented by [JM Family Enterprises](#), Southeast Toyota Distributors and [JM Lexus](#).

The 2010 African-American Achievers are: **Dr. Emma Banks**, Education; **William “DC” Clark**, Community Service; **Leroy Jones**, Business and Entrepreneurism; **Perry Stokes**, Arts and Culture; and **Jhadrian Lawrence**, Jerome Edmund Gray Youth Achiever presented by [The Jim Moran Foundation](#).

“Imagine if each of us did just one thing that inspired others,” JM Family President and CEO Colin Brown said to the audience. “Imagine the ripple effect we would have. That’s what our honorees do. We believe that programs and individuals who uplift the community deserve our recognition.”

Established in 1992 by the late Jim Moran, founder of JM Family and its subsidiaries, the African-American Achievers awards carries on the vision of Moran to recognize those who unselfishly invest their time and talents toward building a stronger community.

Youth Achiever Awarded FSU Scholarship

At the ceremony, The Jim Moran Foundation announced Miami Northwestern High School senior Jhadrian Lawrence as the recipient of the Jerome Edmund Gray Youth Achiever award.

Lawrence was recognized as a role model for fellow students because she strives for excellence in all that she does. With spirit and perseverance, she juggles her advanced academic classes with community service and marching band activities – all while caring for her disabled mother.

“To be selected by The Jim Moran Foundation means a whole lot,” said Lawrence. “It’s nice to know I’m one person who somebody feels is deserving.”

Each year the Jerome Edmund Gray Youth Achiever award is presented to a high school senior who qualifies for financial aid and has applied and received admission to [Florida State University](#) (FSU). Named in memory of 1995 African-American Achiever Jerome Edmund Gray, Esq., the award is given by [The Jim Moran Foundation](#) with funding provided through the [Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship](#) at FSU. **The Youth Achiever receives a needs-based, four-year scholarship to FSU.**

About the 2010 Adult Achievers

Arts & Culture: **Perry Stokes** believes there is a light shining in every student, and he intends to ignite it. As a teacher at Carver Middle School, he fosters creative thinking in his “Stokes Stars” and emphasizes that love, respect, hope and discipline can propel them toward a successful future. As a well-known performer and vocal instructor, Stokes celebrates African-American culture through playwriting.

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Business & Entrepreneurism: When **Leroy Jones** founded the Neighbors and Neighbors Association, Inc. (NANA) 15 years ago, his vision was a more prosperous and economically sound African-American community. Today, NANA has helped small businesses qualify for more than \$16 million in grants, financial assistance and low-interest loans. The generosity of NANA extends beyond financial support as well, helping to provide free office space for emerging businesses.

Community Service: **William “DC” Clark** realizes charity begins at home, and he credits his benevolence to mentors like his mother, father and many other dedicated, like-minded members of the community. He is a firefighter and paramedic for the Miami Dade Fire & Rescue and co-founder of I.A.M. Miami, a literary and political organization that elevates the presence of the African-American community by celebrating its history, heritage and culture.

Education: As the founder and principal of Inlet Grove Community Charter High School, **Dr. Emma Banks** carries out her personal mission every day -- to provide youth with the opportunity to achieve a high school education and continue their pursuit of higher learning. Dr. Banks works tirelessly to give at-risk students the tools they need to be successful in classroom and in all areas of their lives.

[Click here](#) to learn more about all of the Achievers.

Charitable Donations in Achievers’ Honor

To further recognize the Achievers, JM Family, Southeast Toyota and JM Lexus annually donate \$20,000 to local nonprofits - \$5,000 in each adult Achiever’s name to the charity(ies) of his or her choice. Selected charities include Inlet Grove Community High School, Inc.; Miami Central Rockets Alumni Association; Neighbors and Neighbors Association, Inc.; Roots Cultural Festival; Sickle Cell Foundation of Palm Beach County; and Delta Cultural & Educational Service Foundation.

Independent Selection Committee

This year’s honorees were chosen from more than 100 nominations by an independent panel of community leaders from the tri-county area:

- o C. Ron Allen, 2006 Community Service Honoree and *Sun Sentinel* Reporter
- o George Gadson, 1995 Community Involvement Honoree and Artist/Owner of George Gadson Studios
- o Sonya Burrows, Community leader and Operations Manager of Burrows Electric Company
- o Shamele Jenkins, 1998 Non-Profit Honoree and President of The Miami-Dade County Foster & Adopted Parent Association
- o Keondra Pierre-Eafford, 1997 Youth Achiever Honoree and Curriculum Specialist/National Board Certified Teacher at Sheridan Hills Elementary School.

Special Performances and Acknowledgments

Local 10 News Anchor Calvin Hughes emceed the event, which included special performances by The Silent Worshippers Mime Ministry, under the direction of Deacon Erskine Kennedy; In Tune, a vocal ensemble from “Student Enrichment Through Arts Training” – an after school program of Mount Olive Development Corporation; and EJ’s Company Band.

Stay Connected

Supporters are encouraged to stay connected with the African-American Achievers program through its Facebook fan page and www.africanamericanachievers.com.

Group photo: Joining Colin Brown (standing, second from right), president and CEO of JM Family Enterprises, and Jan Moran (seated, middle), chairman and president of The Jim Moran Foundation, are the 2010 African-American Achievers: (standing from left) Perry Stokes, Arts and Culture; William “DC” Clark, Community Service; Leroy Jones, Business and Entrepreneurism; (seated from left) Dr. Emma Banks, Education; and Jhadrian Lawrence, Jerome Edmund Gray Youth Achiever.

[Click here to view a two-minute video clip of the event.](#)

About JM Family Enterprises, Inc.

JM Family Enterprises, Inc. (www.jmfamily.com), founded by Jim Moran in 1968, is a diversified automotive company ranked by Forbes as the 30th-largest privately held company in the U.S. It is currently ranked No. 28 by FORTUNE® as one of the 100 Best Companies to Work For, its 12th consecutive year on the list. The company is also ranked No. 8 on Computerworld’s list of “100 Best Places to Work in IT.” Primary subsidiaries and divisions include: Southeast Toyota Distributors, LLC, World Omni Financial Corp., JM&A Group, JM Service Center LLC, and JM Lexus. Headquartered in Deerfield Beach, Fla., JM Family has major operations in Jacksonville and Margate, Fla.; Commerce and Alpharetta, Ga.; Mobile, Ala.; and St. Louis, Mo.

About The Jim Moran Foundation

Founded by Jim Moran in 2000, the mission of The Jim Moran Foundation is to improve the quality of life for the youth and families of Florida through the support of innovative programs and opportunities that meet the ever-changing needs of the community. It is located at 100 Jim Moran Boulevard, Deerfield Beach, Fla. 33442. Through a long-term Grant Agreement, The Foundation’s significant funders are JM Family Enterprises Inc., and its subsidiaries, including Southeast Toyota Distributors, LLC. To learn more about The Foundation visit www.jimmoranfoundation.org or call (954) 429-2122.

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